

# Bridge Rental Assistance Program (BRAP)

VERMONT HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN  
SERVICES

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VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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## The Issue

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Vermont's housing crisis has outpaced federal rental assistance

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Only 1 in 4 eligible households receive federal rental help, waiting lists are long

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The lack of available federal subsidies is causing bottle-necks in other state-funded initiatives

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Emergency responses do not create long-term stability

## The Solution

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Create a state-funded Bridge Rental Assistance Program (BRAP)

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Ongoing tenant-based and project-based rental subsidies modeled after the federal Housing Choice Voucher program

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Stabilize the most vulnerable Vermont households

# How the Program Works

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Ongoing rental assistance with no time limits



Tenant rent capped at 40% of adjusted income at admission



State pays remaining rent up to a local payment standard



Administered by VSHA using existing systems



Partnership with the Agency of Human Services



Annual legislative reporting on performance measures

# Priority Populations

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Individuals and families exiting homelessness

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Families engaged with the child welfare system (to support reunification)

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Individuals exiting hospitals, corrections, or residential care

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People with disabilities, including developmental/intellectual disabilities

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Households on federal voucher waiting lists

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Households receiving time-limited rental assistance

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\* Ultimately determined by the State

## Fiscal Impact

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Initial investment: \$3 million

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Include planning period to determine priorities, create policies and performance measures

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Can serve approximately 200 households for 12 months

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Multi-year funding improves stability and landlord participation

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Optional cost-sharing by referring state agencies and/or departments

## Estimated Annual Cost per Household

Emergency Shelter	\$54,750
In-state Incarceration	\$120,085
Skilled Nursing Facility	\$142,920
Emergency Department Use	\$553,340
<b>Bridge Rental Assistance Program</b>	<b>\$12,240</b>

# Housing & System Impact

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Rental subsidies ensure the financial viability of affordable housing developments



Maximizes impact of state investments and initiatives such as VHIP



Reduces pressure on emergency shelter and healthcare systems



## Evidence & Precedent

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Rental assistance is among the most effective homelessness prevention strategies

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Improves housing stability, health outcomes, and system efficiency

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Comparable programs operate in MA (MRVP), CT (RAP), and RI

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VSHA has over 20 years of experience administering state-funded bridge programs

<b>H.594 Strategy</b>	<b>How BRAP Complements It</b>
Shift away from hotels to permanent housing	Provides permanent rental subsidies that make hotel exits possible
Tiered continuum of care	BRAP supplies the permanent-housing tier
Focus on high-need households	Targets the same populations and expands placement options
Require active housing search	Makes units financially accessible
Emphasize accountability and cost efficiency	Delivers major cost savings vs. crisis care

H.594 reorganizes the emergency housing system, and BRAP provides the rental assistance needed to make that structure workable, ensuring Vermonters have a permanent, affordable place to transition to

## Bottom Line



BRAP is a proven, cost-effective investment



Stabilizes vulnerable Vermonters



Reduces reliance on emergency systems



Lowers long-term public costs while strengthening housing stability

# Contact Information

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